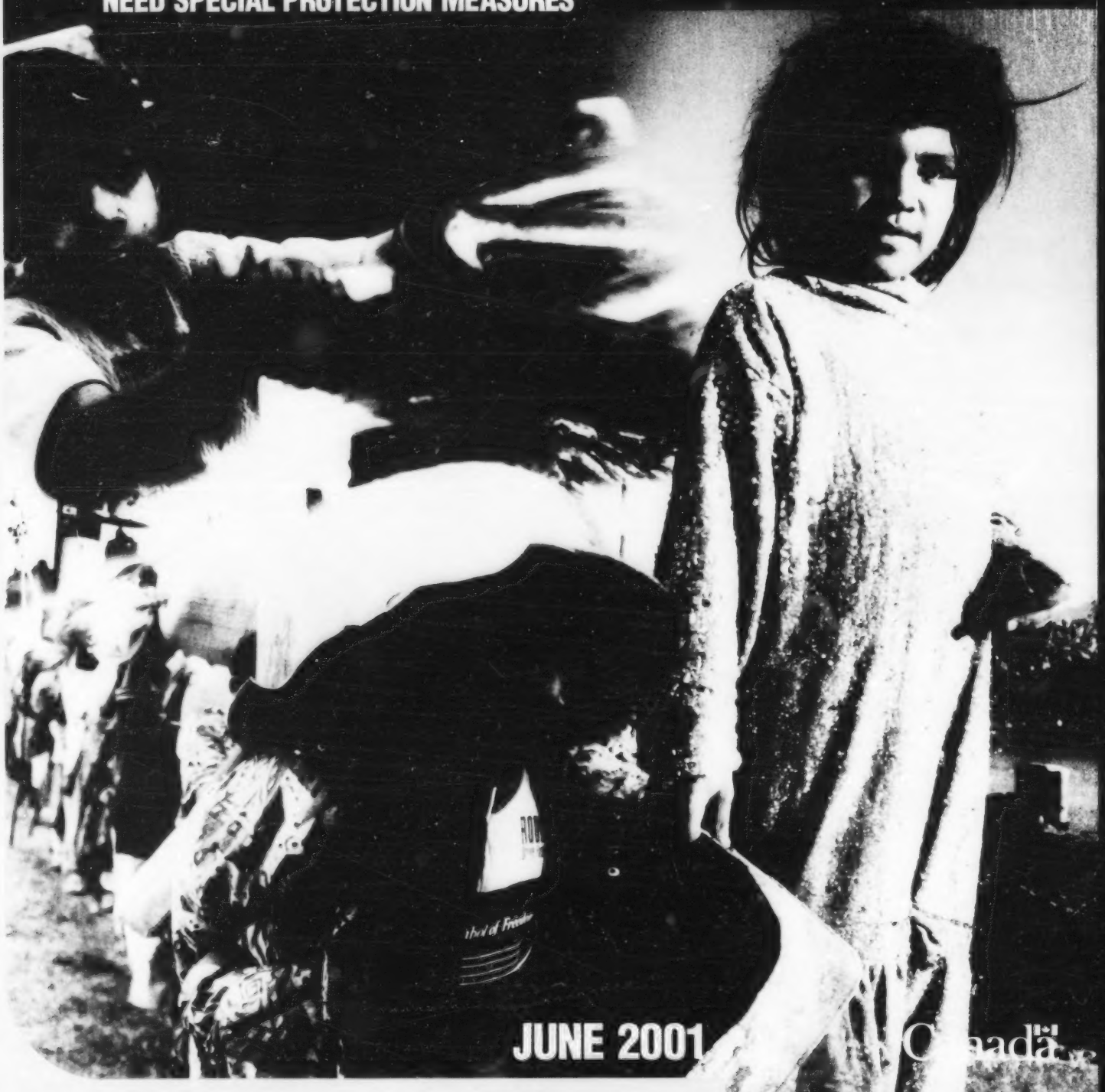
CIDA's ACTION PLAN ON CHILD PROTECTION

PROMOTING THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN WHO NEED SPECIAL PROTECTION MEASURES



JUNE 2001

Canada

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Promoting the rights of children who need special protection measures

CIDA

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Executive summary

In September 2000, Maria Minna, Canada's Minister for International Cooperation, launched *CIDA's Social Development Priorities: A Framework for Action.* The framework refocuses the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) on its poverty-reduction mandate by increasing investments over five years in health and nutrition, basic education, HIV/AIDS, and child protection, with gender equality as an integral part of all these priorities.

Children are an important focus of CIDA's social development priorities. *CIDA's Action Plan on Child Protection* focuses exclusively on children—specifically, the most marginalized girls and boys who often experience exploitation, abuse, and discrimination and who require special measures to support their development. CIDA defines these children as child labourers, children affected by armed conflict, children with disabilities, sexually exploited children, street-involved children, children facing discrimination because of their ethnic or religious identity, and children in conflict with the law or in institutional care. In all of these situations, girls and boys may experience exploitation, abuse, and discrimination differently.

The international community has learned many lessons through its work with children, including the need to view girls and boys as active participants in their own development rather than as passive beneficiaries of assistance. These lessons led CIDA to adopt a rights-based approach for *CIDA's Action Plan on Child Protection*. The rights-based approach uses the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* as its framework for promoting the realization of all children's rights. The approach recognizes the right of girls and boys to participate in decisions that affect their lives, as well as the importance of building on children's coping strategies. It also values a multifaceted analysis of the structural causes which lead to violations of children's rights, and advocates a holistic response to children's situations.

"For nearly every country on the face of the earth, the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* is our moral compass. It's as fundamental as the law of gravity, and it should be just as non-negotiable."

Maria Minna,
Minister for International Cooperation
(at the closing of the Experts' Meeting of the International Conference on War-Affected Children, Winnipeg, Canada, September 2000)

CIDA's Action Plan on Child Protection has a total budget of $122 million over five years (2000-2005), including a $2-million research fund on child protection. The action plan commits the Agency to adopting a strategic focus on child labour and children affected by armed conflict, and to exploring new opportunities in other areas of child protection, in collaboration with its partners. CIDA's work in child protection will be guided by a specific set of criteria, including innovation, multidimensional analysis, child participation, empowerment, policy dialogue, partnership, and learning.

Each of CIDA's programming branches is developing a plan for implementing the child-protection initiatives outlined in this action plan. CIDA will work with its partners to develop a performance-measurement framework to assess the impact and report on the results of *CIDA's Action Plan on Child Protection*. A new team at CIDA, composed of the Child Protection Unit in Policy Branch and the Agency-wide Child Protection Advisors Group, will help implement the action plan.

Promoting the rights of children who need special protection measures

CIDA's mandate is to promote sustainable development in order to reduce poverty and to contribute to a more secure, equitable, and prosperous world. As part of its commitment to fulfilling this mandate, CIDA has supported international development assistance efforts for children—defined by the United Nations as all girls and boys under the age of 18.

Given their disproportionate representation among the world's poor and the long-term impact of poverty on them, children are an important focus within CIDA's social development priorities.

Historically, CIDA's programming for children has concentrated on meeting their basic human needs by providing services related to maternal and child health, immunization, micronutrient deficiencies, and basic education. Community-development initiatives and many of CIDA's other development efforts—especially in the areas of basic human needs, gender equality, and human rights, democratic development, and good governance—have also benefited children by improving the well-being of their families and communities. Many of CIDA's child-specific programs, and its broader development initiatives with poor families and communities, have successfully prevented children from becoming more marginalized and exposed to exploitation, abuse, and discrimination.

The Agency recently renewed its focus on its poverty mandate through *CIDA's Social Development Priorities: A Framework for Action*. The framework commits the Agency to making aggressive investments over five years to bolster and strengthen programming in four priority areas of social development: health and nutrition, basic education, HIV/AIDS, and child protection, with gender equality as an integral part of all these priorities. The purpose of setting social development priorities is to increase CIDA's effectiveness in realizing its poverty-reduction goals. In other words, "the heart of the social development priority framework is poverty reduction."[1]

Given their disproportionate representation among the world's poor and the long-term impact of poverty on them, children are an important focus within CIDA's social development priorities. The health and nutrition, basic education, and HIV/AIDS action plans all include a focus on children. *CIDA's Action Plan on Child Protection* focuses exclusively on the most marginalized children who often experience exploitation, abuse, and discrimination. Although this action plan is an important new focus of CIDA's work, it is only part of the Agency's support for children in developing countries and countries in transition.

See page 42 for notes to text.

The challenges facing children

Children and poverty

Despite ever-increasing wealth and technological advances in many parts of the world, poverty remains the reality for millions of people in developing countries and countries in transition. As noted in *CIDA's Sustainable Development Strategy*, "the benefits of globalization have been shared unevenly, and many substantial challenges remain."[2] Poverty remains a major challenge for millions of children. According to recent studies by the United Nations, 40 percent of all children in the least developed countries are struggling to survive on less that US$1 per day.

Children not only represent a disproportionately large number of the poor, they are adversely affected by poverty at a critical stage in their development. Poverty hurts the physical and psychological health of girls and boys. It hinders their chances of acquiring the skills, capacities, and confidence they need to reach their full potential: "Poverty causes lifelong damage to children's minds and bodies, turning them into adults who perpetuate the cycle of poverty by transmitting it to their children."[3]

Poverty also results in children being denied their fundamental human rights. For example, 130 million children worldwide do not go to school. Huge gaps exist in the accessibility and quality of education between urban and rural children, and between girls and boys. Thousands of children die every day from largely preventable diseases and poor nutrition, and millions of girls and boys are denied their right to clean water, sanitation, health services, and good nutrition. Many children do not enjoy the right to express their views and to be consulted by adults on matters that affect their lives.

Realizing children's rights is essential to reducing poverty in a sustainable way, since children living in poverty have the potential to help break long-standing cycles of poverty. For example, the World Bank considers investing in girls' education one of the most effective poverty-reduction measures. Children who enjoy their rights have a much better chance of becoming responsible adults who promote the economic and social development of their communities, and who are committed to the principles of democracy, peace, and justice. The depth of the world's commitment to these ideals will radically shape the societies in which we live, and the nature of global security in this new century.

As the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) argues, "poverty reduction must begin with the protection and realization of the human rights of children. Investments in children are the best guarantee for achieving equitable and sustainable human development."[4]

Children and exploitation, abuse, and discrimination

Poverty-reduction measures—such as investing in health, nutrition, and education—are critical to all children's well-being. One of the most important ways to improve the lives of girls and boys in developing countries and countries in transition is by increasing investments in the social sector. However, many of the traditional interventions in these areas have neglected certain groups of children. For example, efforts to improve the quality of education in schools often fail to reach child labourers who need more flexible educational opportunities because of their work schedules. Likewise, children in communities affected by armed conflict may not benefit from health-care services provided in other, more peaceful regions of the country.

Child labourers, children affected by armed conflict, and other groups of marginalized children often experience further violations of their rights through exploitation, abuse, and discrimination. As a result, they need specific interventions or "special protection measures" to support their development and to ensure their rights are fulfilled. For example, children leaving the commercial sex trade need protection from further sexual exploitation. However, a narrow response to this problem alone is insufficient. A holistic response may involve counselling or other means of helping children heal, in addition to more mainstream health services, educational opportunities, vocational training, a supportive community in which to live, and opportunities to participate in decision-making.

CIDA considers the following groups of children to be in need of special protection measures.[1]

Child labourers

More than 250 million girls and boys work. About 120 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 are working full-time. Child labourers are an incredibly diverse group of girls and boys involved in many different kinds of work. Children work for many reasons—because they live in extreme poverty and must earn a living to help support themselves or their families, because they lack access to education or have received a poor or irrelevant education, because they want to take advantage of the chance to learn life skills that are not taught in school, or because they are forced to work by their families or communities. Employers may want to hire children because they can be exploited as cheap workers, or because they can perform specific tasks well because of their size.

While some children perform work that is not harmful, does not preclude education, and can provide useful skills, other children work in harmful situations and are prevented from attending school. The International Labour Organization's (ILO) recent *Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour* defines these worst forms as slavery, the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage (when adults pledge their child's labour until a debt is repaid), serfdom (when adults pledge a child's labour in exchange for the use of agricultural land), forced or compulsory labour (including use in armed conflict), commercial sexual exploitation, and other illicit activities (including the production and trafficking of drugs), as well as any work likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children. Other kinds of work that may be harmful to children include "hidden work" such as domestic service, which is undertaken most often by girls.

Children affected by armed conflict

Children affected by armed conflict are those living through a current conflict or dealing with a post-conflict situation. In the past decade alone, wars have claimed the lives of 2 million girls and boys, and have left another 5 million children physically disabled. A disproportionate number of children, especially adolescent boys, are injured by land mines. Millions of children live in refugee camps or are internally displaced because of conflict. Millions more have been traumatized by the violence they have witnessed.

About 300,000 children currently participate in conflicts around the world. While boys may be recruited in greater numbers as soldiers, girls may be exploited by armed forces as combatants or as domestic servants, spies, or sex slaves. The *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts* (2000) commits governments to ending the use of child soldiers in combat and the forced recruitment of children under 18 years of age.

War breaks down families, increases the likelihood of sexual exploitation, and exposes children—especially girls—to a heightened risk of contracting HIV. When orphaned by armed conflict, children are often left to run households and care for younger siblings. Children in conflict or post-conflict situations may also lose access to

basic social services such as health care and good nutrition, which results in diseases such as cholera or dysentery spreading more rapidly. Loss of access to education denies children the learning opportunities that help empower them with hope and skills for the future.

Children with disabilities

There are 120 to 150 million disabled children in the world—80 percent of them live in developing countries. One child in 10 is born with or acquires a physical, mental, sensory, intellectual, or physiological disability because of preventable diseases, congenital causes, malnutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, accidents and injuries, armed conflict, or land mines.

The World Health Organization estimates that only five percent of disabled children in developing countries have access to supports or services of any kind, and that less than two percent attend school. Physical and attitudinal barriers often prevent families and communities from providing these children with the same opportunities that non-disabled children have. As a result of discrimination and often profound stigmatization, children with disabilities face an uncertain future.

Sexually exploited children

Although estimates of the number of children forced into the commercial sex trade vary, it is probably well over 1 million children every year. The city of Mumbai, India, has about 30,000 children working in the sex trade.

Thousands of children are trafficked illegally across international borders by organized criminal operations, primarily for commercial sexual exploitation (including prostitution and pornography). Children may also be sexually abused in their homes and communities by relatives or other members of the community. Girls constitute the majority of sexually exploited children, and are often subjected to unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions. All sexually exploited girls and boys are at high risk of violence and injury, sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS, and social ostracism, in addition to a loss of self-worth and hope.

Governments are now ratifying the *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography* (2000). This Optional Protocol commits governments to taking all necessary measures to prohibit the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography, including child pornography on the Internet.

"We street children are by ourselves; we have no one in front or behind who cares for us. There is no one to cry for us when we die. Yet we are free to do what we want. Yes, I was a street child and you are one, but you need to get rid of these thoughts in your minds of being a street child. You need to determine in your own mind, by yourself, to do something for yourself that will be important for your future. We are sure that if you work hard and think positively, you will definitely reach the peak of success one day."

Rewat Timilshina, ex-street child and member of Jagaran, a street children's organization in Nepal

Street-involved children

While estimates of the number of children living on the streets are highly speculative, the global figure for children working on the streets is likely well over 100 million. Brazil alone has an estimated 100,000 children between the ages of 7 and 18 working on the street.

Street-involved children may be homeless, or they may have a home and use the street as a place to earn an income. Most of them work in the informal economy, outside of the organized economic sector. Street-involved children may live or work on the street for many reasons. They may be drawn to the streets by the opportunity to earn an income, or the possibility of adventure and independence. They may be pushed onto the street because of abuse or neglect they experience at home.

Street-involved children can develop a strong sense of community with one another, but are usually mistrustful of authority. They are frequently subjected to human-rights abuses, including forced institutionalization and violence. In extreme situations, they may be killed. Street-involved children face high health risks from a lack of hygiene, poor nutrition, and air pollution. They may face additional risks, such as HIV/AIDS infection, if they are involved in substance abuse or the sex trade.

Children facing discrimination because of their ethnic or religious identity

Children from certain religious or ethnic groups, including indigenous children, are often the target of discrimination and violence. Mainstream society may reject children from specific ethnic or religious groups. This can result in children becoming disconnected from their own cultural or religious values, leading to a loss of self-confidence, social isolation, depression, and self-destructive behaviour. Children from minority ethnic or religious groups also face a greater threat of being institutionalized or treated

unfairly by authorities, and may be specifically targeted during periods of armed conflict.

Children in conflict with the law or in institutional care

Many countries lack legislative guidelines on when and how children are taken into custody. Children are often incarcerated for minor offences, such as loitering or soliciting, that are symptomatic of their poverty. When they encounter the police or members of the justice system, children can be exposed to a variety of unfair and abusive situations: they may be tried as adults or subjected to cruel treatment and punishment; they may be held in adult institutions without access to education or visits from their families; they may experience physical and sexual violence from older inmates; and they may be forced to live in crowded and unsanitary conditions.

Orphans, or children abandoned by or removed from their families, often live in institutions run by the state, the church, or non-governmental organizations (NGOs). These children may be in institutions for much of their childhood and can face problems of neglect, abuse, violence, and isolation from their communities.

Gender discrimination

In all of these difficult situations, gender discrimination adds another dimension. For girls, discrimination can include a heavier workload at home, lack of access to reproductive health services, sexual harassment, and violence. Girls are also deprived of an education more often than boys, which prevents them from developing the skills they need to improve their capacity to earn an income, voice their opinions in family decision-making, and protect themselves from violence. For boys, there may be added pressures, such as being forced to participate in armed conflict or to perform heavy work that affects their health.

CIDA recognizes that there may be other children not included in these categories who need special protection measures. For example, HIV/AIDS-affected children require special protection, and are covered by *CIDA's HIV/AIDS Action Plan*. Children may also belong to several categories at the same time. For example, a girl living on the streets in Rwanda may also be affected by the armed conflict in her country. The distinct groupings above are not intended to deny the complex realities of many children's lives. Instead, they will help CIDA identify children who need protection from exploitation, abuse, and discrimination, and who need extra support to reach their full potential.

What do all of these groups of children have in common? They are often the most marginalized members of some of the poorest families and communities in the world. Their lives are often characterized by the following factors:

- widespread poverty;
- few income-generating opportunities;
- limited access to social infrastructure or substandard social services in areas such as health, nutrition, and education;
- armed conflict and other forms of political instability;
- weak governance structures;

- poor domestic legislation or limited implementation of existing laws to protect children;
- human-rights violations and harmful traditional practices;
- environmental degradation; and
- limited decision-making opportunities.

As a result of the complex interplay between many of these contributing factors, children are at great risk of exploitation, abuse, and discrimination. They may experience exploitation, abuse, and discrimination in a variety of settings, including their homes, communities, schools, workplaces, institutions, or the street.

These children are not just victims—they are survivors. They often show incredible resilience in overcoming or living in the midst of adversity. They have developed coping mechanisms for caring for themselves, and for friends or family members. These children are active participants in their families, workplaces, and communities. However, without improved protection and promotion of their rights together with increased opportunities, many of these children are likely to remain oppressed members of society throughout their childhood and into adulthood.

These children are not just victims—they are survivors. They often show incredible resilience in overcoming or living in the midst of adversity. They have developed coping mechanisms for caring for themselves, and for friends or family members. These children are active participants in their families, workplaces, and communities.

Examples of child-protection challenges in different regions

In **Latin America and the Caribbean**, there are millions of child labourers and street-involved children:

- Most child labourers in Latin America and the Caribbean work in the agricultural sector, which can present risks to children's well-being when their duties exceed their strength and capacity, or when they are exposed to harmful substances such as pesticides. Many children in the region, especially girls, work as domestic servants. In Haiti, 20 percent of the estimated 250,000 domestic servants are girls between 7 and 10 years old. Girls working in this environment can be isolated, denied access to education, and sexually, physically, or emotionally abused.

- The streets are home to many children who work in the informal sector as shoe-shiners, rag-pickers, vendors, and sex-trade workers. While the sex trade is one of the worst forms of child labour, the other forms of work can vary in the harm or benefits they bring to street-involved children. Street-involved children are often in conflict with the law, and may be institutionalized for long periods of time.

In **Africa and the Middle East**, one of the major challenges for children is the prevalence of armed conflict:

- Tens of thousands of African children are directly affected by armed conflicts in countries such as Algeria, Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and northern Uganda. Alarmingly, children in Africa are not only affected by war as civilians, but often participate in conflict as volunteers or forced recruits. More than 120,000 African children—some as young as eight years old—are used as soldiers, cooks, messengers, or sex slaves. In Sierra Leone, child soldiers have committed some of the worst atrocities against other people, including rape and mutilation.

- Increased violence since September 2000 in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories has been associated with a popular Palestinian uprising in response to Israeli occupation and frustration over the lack of progress in the Middle East peace process. The economic situation in the Occupied Territories has also been seriously undermined by the crisis.

The impact has been felt most strongly by children, whose well-being is hindered by decreased access to health care, food, shelter, and education, as well as constant exposure to violence. Domestic violence and other social problems are also increasing, especially in overcrowded refugee camps.

Throughout **Asia**, the sexual exploitation of children and child labour are major concerns:

- The commercial sexual exploitation of children, including the trafficking of children for sexual purposes, is a serious problem in Asia. Thousands of Nepali and Bangladeshi girls are sold every year to brothels in India. Many more children, mostly girls from Cambodia, China, Laos, and Vietnam, are sold to brothels in Thailand. These children are at great risk of sexual, physical, and emotional abuse, unwanted pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.

- There are millions of children working in Asia, many in conditions that cause harm to their well-being. Although most work in home-based agricultural activities, children are increasingly working in other sectors of the economy. Despite extensive publicity, bonded child labourers are still found working in the carpet industry in India, Nepal, and Pakistan. In fact, so many parents have their children work in exchange for a loan that this practice is often not recognized as a form of bonded labour.

In **Central and Eastern Europe**, many children experience discrimination because of their disabilities or ethnic-minority status:

- Many children in the region have physical disabilities due to birth defects or land-mine accidents. They face physical and attitudinal barriers that prevent them from reaching their full potential. These barriers include health-care systems that do not adequately support children's rehabilitation, and misperceptions among the general public about the rights of disabled children.

- The Roma children in Central and Eastern Europe experience racial prejudice because of their ethnic-minority status. They often feel unwelcome in schools—teachers may place them at the back of the classroom or may refuse to touch them, and the other students often shun them. In some cases, Roma children are completely segregated into substandard schools.

The response of the international community

How has the international community responded to the many challenges facing girls and boys, especially those in need of special protection measures? In 1989, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. The Convention was developed during the 1980s after much debate and many consultations among governments, NGOs, and UN agencies, especially UNICEF. The Convention is the most comprehensive of all UN human-rights treaties, and articulates the economic, civil, cultural, political, and social rights of all children. Countries that have ratified the Convention report regularly to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child about their progress in implementing the Convention.

The 1990 World Summit for Children, which was the first of several international conferences on global issues, put children on the agenda of the world's leaders. It attracted international attention to the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, which all countries except the United States and Somalia have since ratified. The summit declaration set specific goals for improving the survival and development of children. A more general goal was established to provide improved protection for children in especially difficult circumstances.

Since the 1990 summit, there have been several international efforts to articulate an agenda for action for certain groups of children who need special protection measures. Spain and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) hosted the 1994 World Conference on Special Needs Education, which included a focus on education for disabled children. In 1996, Sweden hosted the World Congress on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. In 1997, the Norwegian government held the International Conference on Child Labour to look more broadly at child-labour issues. In September 2000, the Canadian government hosted the International Conference on War-Affected Children. These conferences helped to galvanize

the international community into taking stronger action on specific child-protection themes.

In September 2001, the United Nations General Assembly will hold a Special Session meeting of heads of state to review the progress the world has made since the 1990 Children's Summit. At this meeting, participants will identify outstanding challenges for children, including the unmet 1990 summit goals, and will establish new goals for the following decade in all areas of children's rights, including child participation and child protection.

Canada's response

Canada played a key role in developing the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Canada also played an important role in initiating the 1990 World Summit for Children, a meeting which the Prime Minister of Canada co-chaired.

With regard to child protection, Canada helped broker the *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts*, as well as the *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography*. Canada also actively participated in the development of the ILO's *Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour*.

In addition, Canada has been an advocate for children who need special protection measures in the following international fora:

- At the United Nations, Canada has encouraged an international focus on human security to address the impact of armed conflict on civilians, including children. Canada used its membership on the United Nations Security Council (1999 and 2000) to promote this human-security theme.

- In West Africa, Canada and Ghana co-hosted a regional conference in April 2000 on war-affected children with members of civil society and West African ministers of foreign affairs and defence.

- In Winnipeg, the Canadian government hosted the International Conference on War-Affected Children in September 2000. The Winnipeg conference included youth, expert, and ministerial-level meetings, and produced a series of recommendations for immediate action by governments, donors, and different members of civil society.

- Internationally, Canada is working with UNICEF and other countries to provide leadership for the 2001 UN General Assembly Special Session on Children. Canada is lobbying for greater attention to child-protection and child-participation issues at this meeting, as well as the other urgent issues affecting children.

Through the National Children's Agenda and programs such as the Aboriginal Head Start Initiative, Canada has made a renewed commitment to reducing child poverty domestically, and to tackling such child-protection issues as ethnic discrimination in Canada.

CIDA's response

Historically, CIDA has supported children in need of special protection measures primarily through its Multilateral Branch and Canadian Partnership Branch. For example, CIDA provides core financial support to UNICEF, which carries out programming in child protection. Canada's support to the ILO, funded jointly through CIDA and the Labour Program of Human Resources Development Canada, is spent entirely on programs aimed at combatting the worst forms of child labour. Much of the international humanitarian assistance that CIDA provides to agencies, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Programme, benefits children affected by armed conflict.

CIDA has provided financial support to Canada's non-governmental and academic communities, which are engaged in innovative programming and policy development for children in need of special protection measures. For example, Street Kids International is recognized around the world for its creative employment strategies for children living on the streets, and for promoting a better understanding of why children end up on the street. The University of Victoria's Institute for Child Rights and Development is exploring how best to promote the participation of indigenous children in local community-development initiatives.

On a smaller scale, CIDA has often supported initiatives in child protection through the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives and other locally administered funds. During the 1980s, the Canada Fund helped local Brazilian groups work with UNICEF in pioneering new approaches to helping Brazil's street-involved children.

More recently, CIDA has begun to make focused investments in child protection through its bilateral programs. This new activity is partly due to the growing recognition within the international community and in Canada that child protection is an important area for international development cooperation.

In addition to increased programming through its bilateral programs, CIDA has become more engaged in policy dialogue on child-protection themes. CIDA is working with international, national, and local partners to develop policy for children who need special protection measures. CIDA's Policy Branch has also supported innovative research and learning initiatives, such as the Egyptian Small and Micro Enterprise Association's workshop on children and work.

CIDA's programming and policy dialogue in child protection has helped improve the lives of girls and boys. Other CIDA-supported initiatives, including efforts to build social infrastructure and strengthen community development, have helped to prevent harm to children. Both the "preventive" and the "rehabilitative" are essential to ensuring the well-being of children.

The rights-based approach

Lessons learned: The need for a new approach

During the past few decades, the international community has identified a number of lessons about its programming and policy-dialogue work for children in need of special protection measures. These lessons include the following:

- Children have been viewed as passive beneficiaries of assistance and objects of compassion, rather than as active participants in their own development. When children's perspectives on their own situation and their sense of responsibility toward their families and communities are ignored, programming is less effective. For example, forcing children out of work situations without consulting them about the reasons why they are working may push them into more harmful work, rather than encouraging them to attend school.

- Children's resourcefulness in overcoming adversity has been underestimated, and children have been seen only as victims and not as resilient human beings. For example, a girl orphaned by war who is caring for her younger siblings is considered vulnerable, and the strength she exhibits in keeping her family together is not often acknowledged.

- Many of the 1990 Children's Summit goals have not been met because children who need special protection measures have been ignored. For example, immunization campaigns may reach 80 percent of the children in a specific country, but the 20 percent who have not been immunized may represent children from ethnic or religious minorities or other groups of children who need special protection in that country.

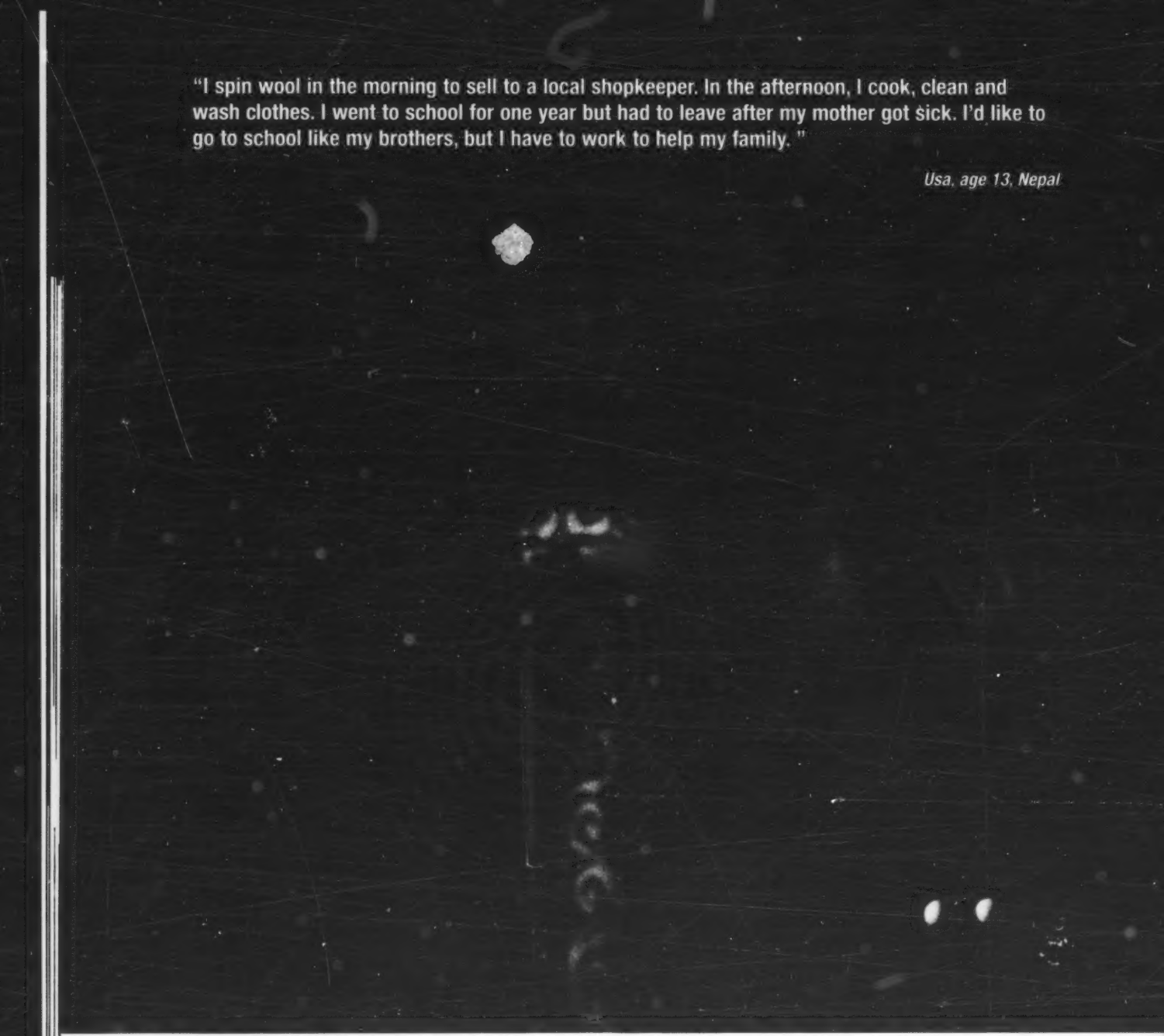
- Sectoral initiatives such as health and education activities are not enough for children who need special protection measures. For example, disabled children need access to basic health services, but providing these services alone will not ensure that these children live full and meaningful lives that are free from discrimination.

- Girls are often less visible than boys. For example, the most visible child workers in some countries may be boys working on the streets. However, there may be even larger numbers of girls who are working in less visible situations, such as domestic labour or the commercial sex trade. Special efforts are required to ensure that the needs and experiences of both girls and boys are documented and understood.

- Poverty is an important contributing factor, but may not be the only reason why children are exploited, abused, or discriminated against. The linkages between poverty and other causal factors of child-protection issues need to be explored in more detail.

- There is little data on children who need special protection measures. Where data is available, it is often not disaggregated by sex, age, or other important factors. As a result, many programming interventions have been based on assumptions about children, including Western definitions of childhood, rather than the reality of children's lives.

- Advocacy and policy dialogue with developing-country governments, other donors, civil society, children, and their communities have sometimes been neglected. However, these activities are crucial to raising the profile of child-protection issues and changing negative attitudes and beliefs about children who need special protection measures. For example, children arrested for crimes may be viewed as "adult criminals," but the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* states that they have the right to be treated in a manner appropriate to their age and level of maturity.



"I spin wool in the morning to sell to a local shopkeeper. In the afternoon, I cook, clean and wash clothes. I went to school for one year but had to leave after my mother got sick. I'd like to go to school like my brothers, but I have to work to help my family."

Usa, age 13, Nepal

- The potential for collaborative efforts is undermined when the different roles that civil society, governments, and children themselves play in responding to challenges are not fully understood. For example, local groups may have specific knowledge about regional patterns in child trafficking—knowledge which could help NGOs and members of the donor community that are lobbying national governments for new trafficking legislation.
- The potentially harmful nature of the relationship between children and service providers has often been overlooked or considered less important than the actual delivery of services to children. For example, some teachers may not allow children from ethnic-minority groups to speak in their native language. Although they are receiving an education, these children's right to their cultural identity is being violated.

- Although interventions in early childhood are critical to a child's survival and development, such interventions alone do not ensure that boys and girls have the opportunity to realize all of their rights as older children. Children between the ages of 12 and 17, often referred to as adolescents, have been especially neglected.[6] Adolescence is an important period in children's lives, since it is a transition to adulthood, and in many cultures adolescents assume adult responsibilities, such as earning an income.

- It is inaccurate to assume that children will always benefit from programming that is intended primarily for their parents or other adults. Instead of having a trickle-down effect, community-development projects sometimes have unintended negative consequences for children. For example, new housing projects in post-conflict situations may inadvertently destroy children's recreational spaces. For children who have been kept indoors in small spaces during long periods of armed conflict, recreation is an important part of the healing process.

The new approach: Children have rights under international law

Adopting a rights-based approach will build on these lessons learned. With the rights-based approach, the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* is used as the guiding framework. As a result, children are not viewed as the objects of compassion or pity, but as the subjects of human rights under international law. Children are seen as "protagonists" and "agents of social transformation."

The *Convention on the Rights of the Child* sets out four fundamental principles to be used in interpreting all other articles of the Convention:

- the best interests of the child must be the primary consideration in all actions concerning children;
- all children have the right to non-discrimination;
- all children have the right to life, survival, and development; and
- all children have the right to participation.

The Convention also includes several specific articles on the right of girls and boys to protection from all economic and

sexual exploitation, violence, armed conflict, and discrimination based on disability, religion, ethnicity, or gender.

The Convention clearly recognizes the responsibilities that parents have in caring for their children. It also acknowledges the role that children play in caring for themselves—an increasingly important role, given the growing number of children on their own.

Implications of the rights-based approach

The rights-based approach has a range of implications for those engaged in policy dialogue and programming for children who need special protection measures. These implications include the following:

- The rights-based approach gives serious attention to children's rights under the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* to participate in decisions that affect their lives, and to have their views duly considered, according to their age and maturity. Encouraging children's participation as "stakeholders" in the development, implementation, and evaluation of initiatives that are meant to help them will result in better programming.

- It places great value on listening to children and identifying their coping strategies as a starting point for donors and NGOs when they develop interventions for children. It emphasizes children's resilience and strength, instead of focusing only on their vulnerabilities.

- It views children's rights as interdependent and indivisible, and does not promote some children's rights as more important than others.

- It questions the reasons why donors' efforts do not reach some children, and tries to identify the root causes of violations of children's rights. For example, to provide all girls and boys with a basic education, it is important to know if children are working full-time and require more flexible school hours, if they are unable to reach schools because of disability or distance, if they are dropping out of school because of ethnic discrimination, or if schools are closed because of armed conflict. Gender analysis is also needed to identify the different barriers that prevent girls and boys from receiving an education.

- The rights-based approach accepts that promoting the rights of older children is just as important as promoting the rights of very young children. It also recognizes that a child's most pressing needs and their ability to respond to them will differ significantly, according to their age.

- It recognizes that interventions to help children who need special protection measures must occur at many levels—with the child, with the family and other social groups, and at the community, national, and international levels.

- The rights-based approach emphasizes the importance of prevention and awareness-raising activities that inform children and their communities about children's rights. For example, local NGOs in Nepal are educating parents and communities about the risks to girls when they are sent away from home to work, including the possibility that they may be exploited in the commercial sex trade. Additional initiatives that can be defined as preventive include building social infrastructure and supporting economic-development opportunities for families whose children are at risk of becoming exploited, abused, or discriminated against in harmful work environments or other adverse situations.

- It recognizes that the child's situation is the result of a complex set of factors, some external and others internal to the child's family and community. It values a multidimensional analysis of the child's situation, including a focus on gender, age, poverty, and other important cultural and social factors. For example, an understanding of local cultural patterns of childhood development is critical to understanding how situations of armed conflict can affect a child's well-being by disrupting or changing these cultural patterns.

- The rights-based approach values advocacy and policy dialogue as critical to raising the profile of child-protection issues and changing attitudes that can block progress.

- It understands that children's rights are reinforced by promoting the rights of all human beings. For example, countries that respect human rights as articulated in the *Convention on the Elimination of All*

Forms of Discrimination Against Women or the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* are often more supportive of children's rights than those countries that do not respect these conventions.

- The rights-based approach recognizes that all governments that have ratified the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* have committed themselves to respecting children's rights as an international obligation. This respect may take different forms. For example, governments may protect children's rights by reforming their juvenile-justice laws, or governments may promote children's rights by increasing financial resources to social sectors such as health care and education.
- It values efforts to strengthen the capacity and build the knowledge and skills of local actors and civil society to better respond to the challenges involved with implementing this approach.

The last decade has resulted in the near universal recognition of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* as the best normative framework outlining children's entitlements. There is now an urgent need to shift the focus from the "what" to the "how." This means exploring how the international donor community can best support the efforts of local and national actors, as well as children themselves, in turning the normative standards outlined in the Convention into reality.

Needs approach	Rights-based approach
Works toward outcome goals	Works toward outcome and process goals
Emphasizes meeting needs	Emphasizes realizing rights
Recognizes needs as valid claims	Recognizes that rights always imply obligations of the state
Meets needs without empowerment	Recognizes that rights can only be realized with empowerment
Accepts charity as the driving motivation for meeting needs	States that charity is insufficient motivation for meeting needs
Focuses on manifestations of problems and immediate causes of problems	Focuses on structural causes of problems, as well as manifestations and immediate causes of problems
Involves narrow sectoral projects	Involves intersectoral, holistic projects and programs
Focuses on social context with little emphasis on policy	Focuses on social, economic, cultural, civil, and political context, and is policy-oriented
"The need for vaccination has been met for 80% of all children."	"The right to vaccination is denied to 20% of all children."

This table outlines some of the important differences between the needs and rights-based approaches. These differences should not, however, be seen as mutually exclusive, since much of the rights-based approach is built on the needs approach.

"We have seen too much change to simply accept the way children are living. We have too much hope in the potential of children to leave things as they are. And we have too much faith in our fellow human beings not to know that the global movement we are calling for can happen."

Nelson Mandela and
Graça Machel, UN Expert on Children and Armed Conflict

A new direction for CIDA in child protection

International goals

Through *CIDA's Action Plan on Child Protection*, the Agency will work toward realizing the following goals which the international community, including Canada, has established:

- ensuring the equal rights of all children to non-discrimination; ensuring that the best interests of the child are a primary consideration in all actions concerning children; ensuring children's rights to life, survival, and development; and ensuring children's right to express their views on all matters affecting them, and to have those views taken seriously (*Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 1989);
- providing improved protection to children who are in especially difficult circumstances, and tackling the root causes leading to such situations (*Plan of Action for Implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990's*, 1990);
- promoting and protecting the rights of girls (*Beijing World Conference on Women: Platform for Action*, 1995);
- taking immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency (*ILO Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour*, 1999);
- ending the use of child soldiers in combat and the forced recruitment of children under 18 years of age (*Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts*, 2000); and
- implementing the recommendations made by youth, expert, and ministerial delegates at the International Conference on War-Affected Children.

Criteria to guide CIDA's work in child protection

Consistent with CIDA's poverty-reduction policy and its commitment to promoting a rights-based approach to programming and policy dialogue for child protection, the Agency will use the following criteria to guide its work with all groups of children who need special protection measures:

- **Innovation:** Using innovative approaches to ensure holistic responses to children and the challenges they face—for example, intersectoral work or the expansion of existing children's programming, or broader community-based approaches to incorporate child-protection initiatives;

- **Multidimensional analysis:** Ensuring multidimensional analyses of the reasons why children are exploited, abused, or discriminated against—including a needs-based assessment and an analysis which focuses on gender, age, poverty, and other important cultural and social factors;

- **Child participation:** Promoting children's right to participate in the design, implementation, and evaluation of projects meant to assist them, and supporting learning opportunities with partners about participatory methods;

- **Empowerment:** Supporting processes which help to empower children, their families, and their communities;

- **Policy dialogue:** Encouraging greater policy dialogue in international, national, and local fora between children, their families, communities and governments, civil society, and donors—including efforts to ensure governments meet their obligations under the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*;

- **Partnership:** Promoting partnerships and strengthening the capacity of local NGOs and institutions to better serve children who need special protection measures; and

- **Learning:** Fostering a learning environment by sharing the results of evaluations and partnering in action-oriented research on child-protection issues to encourage more evidence-based interventions.

CIDA's strategic focus: Child labour and children affected by armed conflict

To have the greatest impact using the resources available, CIDA's programming and policy dialogue about child protection will emphasize child labour and children affected by armed conflict. CIDA has chosen these two areas for a strategic focus throughout the five-year period for the following reasons:

- Child labour and the effects of armed conflict are major poverty-related issues. For example, poor families with limited income-generating opportunities may sacrifice the education of their children to send them to work full-time. Poor communities are often more susceptible to armed conflicts and to the forced or voluntary recruitment of children as soldiers.

- The significant number of child labourers worldwide and the potential impacts of work on children's development make it imperative that the international community pay more attention to this issue. Child labour is also becoming increasingly important in international negotiations, including those involving the ILO and the World Trade Organization.

- The physical and psychosocial wounds that children suffer during armed conflicts, as well as the frequent breakdown of all family and community structures, can have devastating consequences for children, and for the possibility of building sustainable peace in their communities.

- There is a growing capacity in these areas within the Canadian non-governmental and academic communities, as demonstrated by the emergence of NGO coalitions on these two themes.

"... we don't think that child labour should be abolished, because in Africa and anywhere in the world, poverty reigns. So children must work, but when they do they must have good working conditions. We also think that we have to fight against exploitation and the most intolerable forms, such as prostitution, slavery and others."

Ibrahima, Luca, Dibou, and Luca, four child labourers from West Africa attending an ILO conference in Geneva

- There are opportunities for CIDA to show leadership on these issues. CIDA can help developing countries and countries in transition implement the ILO convention on the worst forms of child labour. CIDA and DFAIT are co-chairing the Winnipeg steering committee, encouraging the adoption of the principles and practices discussed at the International Conference on War-Affected Children.

Plans for action on child labour

The majority of girls and boys work in some capacity. Campaigns to ban child labour or to boycott products that children make have sometimes forced children into even more dangerous work situations—they have not increased children's chances of getting an education.

In accordance with the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, CIDA is committed to preventing harm to children through work, not to ending all children's work. As a result, CIDA makes a distinction between children working in harmful situations and children doing work that is not harmful. According to the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, harm can be defined as all situations that have a negative impact on the child's psychological, social, physical, or spiritual well-being. For example, harm may include physically or emotionally abusing a child in the workplace, or denying the child access to education by insisting on long working hours. Determining the impact of work on a child requires careful analysis of each situation, including the child's gender, age, and developmental status, as well as the type and amount of work being performed.

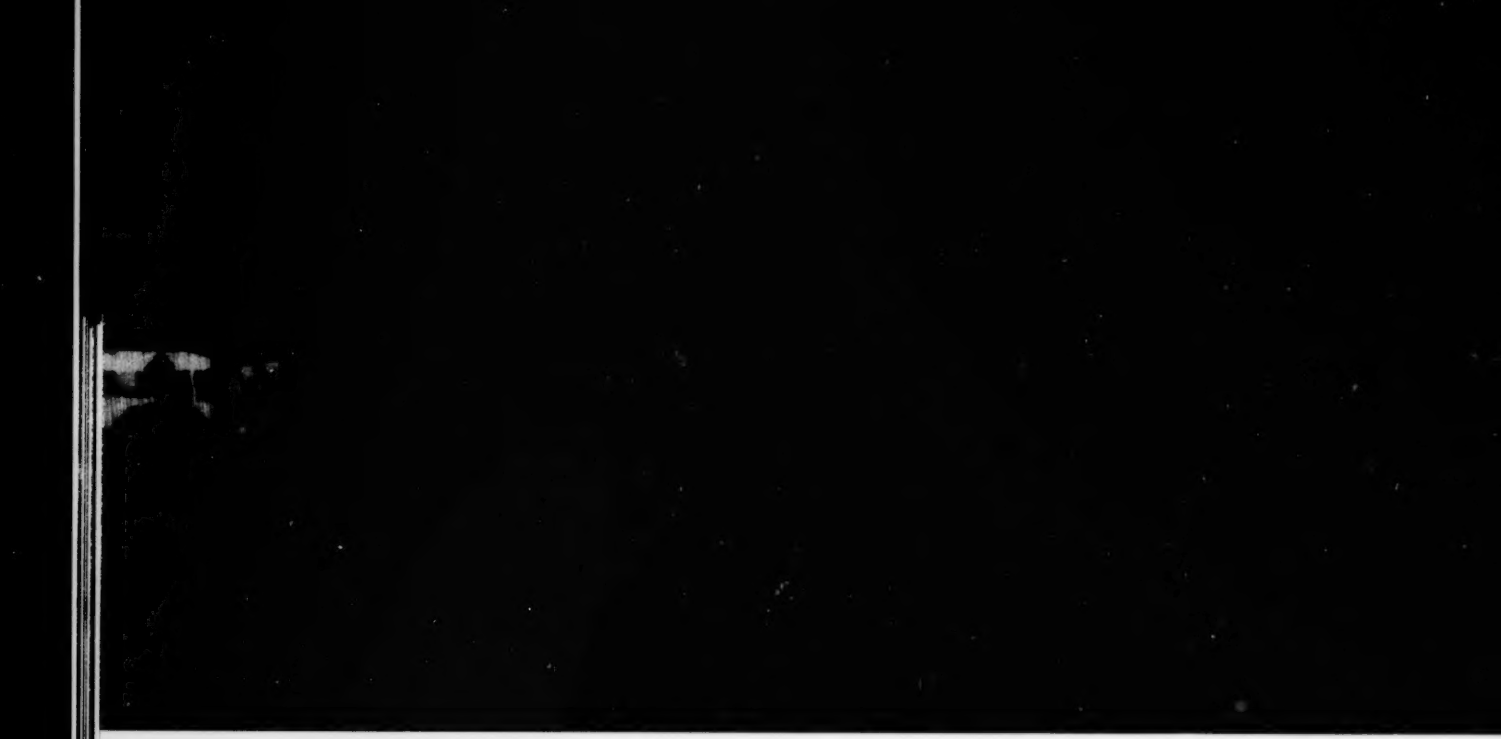
CIDA will work with children engaged in harmful work, as well as with those involved in non-harmful work, recognizing that different approaches are required to guarantee the rights of children in each case. CIDA will work to prevent and end harmful child labour. CIDA will also help child labourers gain the knowledge, tools, and opportunities they need to achieve their potential and to participate as full members of their families and communities.

CIDA will support programming that includes components such as the following:

- education, vocational training, and other opportunities for children who leave harmful work, including the worst forms of child labour as defined by the ILO convention;
- increased access to high-quality, formal or non-formal education, and other important services and opportunities for children who continue to work;
- psychosocial programs and other ways to help children heal from exploitative situations, including creative initiatives involving the arts and recreation;
- special initiatives to reach children in hidden work situations, such as girls in domestic service;
- vocational training and income-generating activities for child labourers and their families; and
- advocacy for the rights of child labourers, especially their right to an education.

In addition:

- CIDA, in partnership with the Labour Program of Human Resources Development Canada and the ILO, will support programs aimed at helping developing countries and countries in transition implement the new convention, which includes collecting comprehensive data to facilitate understanding of child-labour issues and to better target efforts.



- CIDA will provide support to child-labour initiatives that incorporate the views of working children in their design, implementation, and evaluation; CIDA will also support initiatives that encourage NGOs and governments to use participatory approaches.

- CIDA will develop child-labour programming based on gender analysis of the different working experiences of girls and boys.

- CIDA will help strengthen the capacity of local NGOs and institutions involved in child-labour issues, including youth organizations.

- CIDA will support new research initiatives on child labour—for example, exploring how small- and micro-enterprise development can help prevent harmful child labour.

- CIDA will explore opportunities to engage the private sector in finding ways to tackle the worst forms of child labour.

- CIDA will increase its efforts to work with new partners at the local level, such as unions and other social movements, to better respond to child-labour issues.

- CIDA will support policy-dialogue opportunities with children, their families and communities, civil society, and governments in countries where child labour is widespread. CIDA will also engage in policy dialogue with other donors and international institutions such as the World Bank, the ILO, and other organizations.

Plans for action on children affected by armed conflict

As recommended at the International Conference on War-Affected Children, CIDA will adopt an integrated approach to protecting the rights of children affected by armed conflict. These children need more than emergency assistance—they need long-term responses that will help them (and their families and communities) build sustainable and meaningful lives.

CIDA's work will be guided by the understanding that girls and boys are affected by armed conflict differently from adults, and differently from each other. CIDA will work with children currently affected by conflicts, as well as those in post-conflict situations. The focus will be on all children affected by armed conflict.

"We speak to you as young people with the experience of war. We have lost out homes and our schools... We have witnessed brutal murders and have been abducted and separated from our families. Some of us have fought in wars against our own kin. We also speak to you as young people who want to be involved in building peace in our communities. We have many concerns but also many ideas that we would like to share with you."

Youth Statement, International Conference on War-Affected Children, Winnipeg, Canada, September 2000

CIDA will support programming that includes components such as the following:

- basic education for refugee and internally displaced children, as well as children in post-conflict situations;
- education that empowers girls and boys to prevent and resolve conflicts;
- vocational training and income-generating activities for children and families affected by armed conflict;
- basic health and nutrition programs, as well as sexual and reproductive health services;
- psychosocial programs and other ways to help children heal, including creative initiatives involving the arts and recreation;
- reunification of children with their families, as well as reintegration into their communities;
- advocacy for the rights of children affected by armed conflict; and
- efforts to identify high-risk situations where children may be harmed by armed conflict, and support for activities that will prevent this harm.

In addition:

- CIDA will support efforts that involve children affected by armed conflict in the design, implementation, and evaluation of interventions for them; CIDA will also support initiatives that encourage NGOs and governments to use participatory approaches.
- CIDA will support programming that is based on an understanding of how girls and boys experience armed conflict differently.
- CIDA will help to strengthen the capacity of local NGOs and institutions, including youth organizations, to support children affected by armed conflict.
- CIDA will support new research initiatives on children affected by conflict—for example, understanding the different impact that conflict has on girls and boys by using sex-disaggregated data.
- CIDA will promote follow-up on the commitments made at the International Conference on War-Affected Children.

- CIDA will support policy dialogue with children, their families and communities, civil society, and governments in countries where armed conflict is prevalent to highlight the impact of war on girls and boys, and to advocate ways to prevent the violation of children's rights during and after conflict. CIDA will also engage in policy dialogue with other donors and international institutions and organizations, including UNICEF, UNHCR, and the office of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

Plans in other child-protection areas

CIDA's strategic focus on child labour and war-affected children means that the Agency will put extra emphasis on supporting initiatives in these areas. However, CIDA will continue to support programming and policy dialogue for other groups of children in need of special protection measures. CIDA will also explore with partners new opportunities for promoting the rights of street-involved children, sexually exploited children, children with disabilities, children who experience discrimination because of their ethnic or religious identity, and children in conflict with the law or in institutional care.

In addition to new programming, CIDA will pursue strategic opportunities for influencing policy development in child protection at the local, national, and international levels.

A research fund for child protection

CIDA recognizes the importance of research in developing evidence-based interventions for all children, including children in need of special protection measures. As a result, CIDA has established a child-protection research fund.

This fund will support innovative research into the situation of children who need special protection measures, including policy and programming options. The research supported by the fund will help develop a deeper understanding of the reality of children's lives, and of the ways CIDA and its partners can best support these children.

Implementing the new direction

Resources

To implement the previously described commitments, CIDA has allocated the following resources to child protection over the next five years:[8]

2000-2001: $10 million
2001-2002: $18 million
2002-2003: $27 million
2003-2004: $31 million
2004-2005: $36 million

The 2004-05 figure of $36 million represents a quadrupling of CIDA resources for children who need special protection measures, compared with $9 million in 1999-2000. Child protection will increasingly become a greater focus of activity at CIDA, both within its existing programs and through new initiatives. Instead of creating one new source of funds, the child-protection resources will be available across all CIDA delivery channels: bilateral, multilateral, and Canadian Partnership Branch programs.

New team at CIDA

CIDA has established a new team to promote the implementation of the action plan across the Agency, and to report to senior managers on the implementation process. This team is comprised of two related groups: the Child Protection Unit, and the Agency-wide Child Protection Advisors Group.

- The **Child Protection Unit**, which is located within the Gender Equality and Child Protection Division of Policy Branch, provides corporate leadership on all issues related to children's rights, including child protection. It is the central focus of information requests, both from the Minister's Office and from outside the Agency, and coordinates the development of new policy documents, as well as CIDA's participation in international events relating to children.
- This unit is complemented in its work by a **Child Protection Advisors Group**, made up of at least one CIDA staff member from each of the Agency's branches. The advisors group has the mandate of promoting the effective implementation of *CIDA's Action Plan on Child Protection* within the Agency, and of providing program and policy advice at the branch level. The team will also work with the Child Protection Unit to advocate for greater awareness of children within all of CIDA's programming, including any unintended consequences that CIDA's broader programming may have on children.

The **Children's Network**, which brings together CIDA staff members who are interested in sharing and deepening their knowledge on children's issues, will also continue as a venue at CIDA to encourage a greater commitment to and understanding of children's rights.

Branch implementation plans

All of CIDA's programming branches are developing plans to guide the implementation of the action plans on the four social development priorities at the branch level. The following are summaries of the child-protection components of these branch implementation plans:[9]

- Over the next five years, CIDA's **Africa and Middle East Branch** will focus its child-protection programs on war-affected children, child labourers, and the issue of child trafficking. For fiscal years 2000-01 and 2001-02, $5.6 million has already been committed to projects for children affected by armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the West Bank, and Rwanda, as well as to a child-labour project in Egypt.

  Beginning in 2001-02, a $2-million project over three years in Sierra Leone will deal with issues related to war-affected children, including rehabilitation, demobilization, and increased social services for

children. The Africa and Middle East Branch has also allocated $3 million to focus on the issue of child trafficking in Mali, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, and Benin. The Canada Fund for Local Initiatives in Africa and the Middle East will also make an important contribution to supporting children who need special protection measures.

- CIDA's **Americas Branch** spent at least $300,000 in fiscal year 2000-01 on child-protection activities, and aims to spend $1.35 million in fiscal year 2001-02. Although strategic programming in child protection is new for CIDA in the region, the issues surrounding the vulnerability of children are not new, and interventions by the Branch will continue to increase over time. In addition to the priority placed on programming for child labourers and street-involved children, CIDA's Americas Branch will support programming for children affected by armed conflict, when appropriate.

- CIDA's **Asia Branch** spent more than $700,000 in 2000-01, and will spend about $1.8 million in 2001-02 on children in need of special protection measures.

Child-protection projects in CIDA's Asia Branch are currently concentrated in India, and focus on child labourers and disabled children. In Bangladesh, a CIDA-supported project in legal reform includes a component on developing a modern juvenile-justice system. Planning is also under way for a new project in Sri Lanka to promote the rights of children who need special protection measures, largely through building the capacity of child-focused NGOs and other organizations.

The development of new projects in Asia will be based on each country's needs, capacity, and commitment to working on child-protection issues. CIDA staff will continue to pay close attention to issues, such as child labour in India, for which programming is currently in place. CIDA's Asia Branch will also consider programming options for children in need of special protection measures as they develop or update the country programming frameworks or development strategies for Pakistan, India, Indonesia, China, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, East Timor, and North Korea.

- For fiscal year 2001-02, CIDA's **Canadian Partnership Branch** will earmark $2.5 million for child-protection activities. The Branch will use its current program mechanisms (NGO programs, the Institutional Cooperation Program, the Industrial Program, and the Youth Internship Program), and will encourage current and potential partners to strengthen their programming in child protection according to their expertise.

- Since much of CIDA's **Central and Eastern Europe Branch**'s activities are not considered official development assistance, they are not included in targets for the social development priorities. However, the Branch has been involved in social programming, and will continue to program in the specific area of child protection.

  In addition to the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, which provides small grants to local initiatives for children, most of CIDA's child-protection activities within the region are concentrated in the Balkans. The primary focus in this area is on war-affected children, and will include efforts to rehabilitate education systems and promote the psychosocial well-being of children. Efforts will also be made to engage governments in policy dialogue on how best to promote the rights of children in need of special protection measures.

- CIDA's **Multilateral Branch** will adopt a two-pronged strategy to implement *CIDA's Action Plan on Child Protection* in its programming and policy-dialogue activities. The Branch has committed to spending $6.7 million of its program resources in 2000-01 and $8.81 million in 2001-02 on this theme.

  The primary focus of this programming will be children affected by armed conflict, and will be carried out by the Branch's emergency and responsive mechanisms of humanitarian/peacebuilding assistance, as well as through multiyear support to UNICEF's education program for children affected by armed conflict in Africa. Increased policy dialogue with partner and multilateral institutions on issues relating to children who need special protection measures will also be a key component of the Branch's implementation plan.

- Through its **Policy Branch**, CIDA will spend up to $2 million over five years to support research initiatives in child protection through a newly established research fund. In fiscal year 2000-01,

$150,000 was spent, and an additional $350,000 will be available in 2001-02. During each of the remaining three years of the implementation of *CIDA's Action Plan on Child Protection* (2002-03 to 2004-05), $500,000 will be spent on research. The fund's first grant is supporting a four-country study on the role of girls in military and paramilitary organizations. The results of this research will be shared at the local level with community groups, NGOs, and other donors. Criteria for selecting research projects for the remaining four years of the research fund has been developed and will be shared with CIDA's partners.

Results

How will CIDA measure success in implementing the action plan? Monitoring and evaluation will continue to take place at the program/project implementation level for all CIDA-supported initiatives. CIDA will also work with partners to develop another level of evaluation: a performance-measurement framework to assess the "overall" implementation of *CIDA's Action Plan on Child Protection*.

Although this performance-measurement framework may differ somewhat from the traditional results chain used at the project level, the framework will articulate key results to be evaluated. This could be done at three levels: development-programming results in child protection; the enabling-environment results for child-protection initiatives; and the operations/management results at CIDA as they relate to child protection.

Using child labour as an example, the following are some of the many kinds of results that CIDA may evaluate:

- **Development-programming results:** Providing formal or non-formal educational opportunities for child labourers to help them gain the knowledge, tools, and opportunities they need to further their development;

- **Enabling-environment results:** Sharing knowledge, building capacity, and developing policy consensus on child labour with civil society, governments, and the donor community; and

- **Operational/management results:** Sharing knowledge, building capacity, and developing policy consensus on child labour within CIDA.

Although the framework for assessing this action plan is still very early in its development, CIDA is committed to evaluating the overall impact of the many activities it carries out under the action plan.

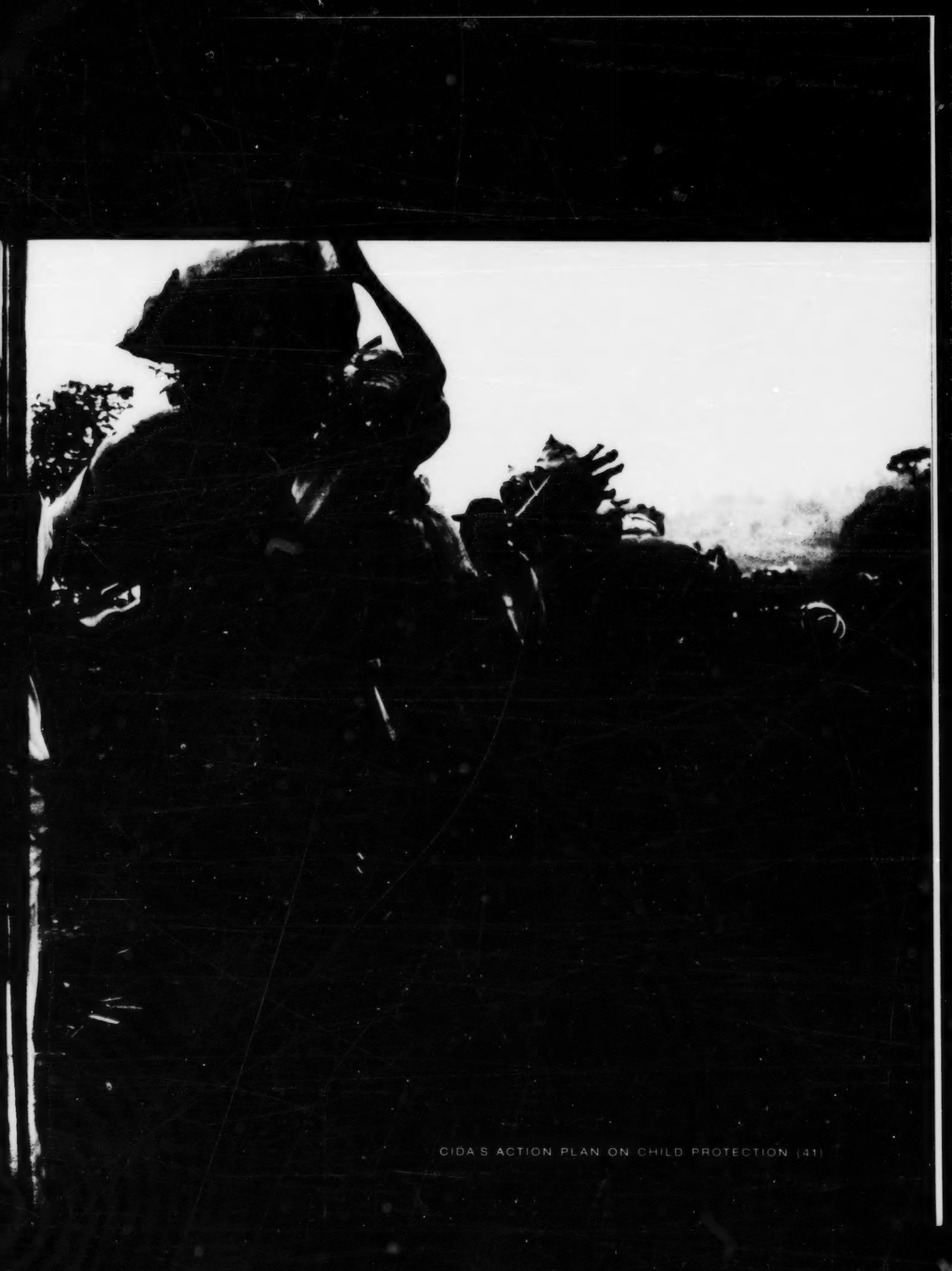
Promoting the rights of children who need special protection measures

This action plan is a significant step forward in CIDA's efforts to promote the rights of children who need special protection measures. It is founded on the resilience and rights of children, and on CIDA's hope for their future.

In five years, CIDA hopes to have achieved the following:

- more interventions grounded in research;
- increased consensus on policy for important child-protection issues;
- innovative programming that responds holistically to children in need of special protection measures; and
- greater participation of children in the programs meant to assist them, and children's increased involvement in developing policy that affects them.

It is only through working together with our partners, including children themselves, that CIDA will help to improve the lives of girls and boys.



Notes to text

1 CIDA, *CIDA's Social Development Priorities: A Framework for Action*, p. 11.

2 CIDA, *CIDA's Sustainable Development Stategy*, p. ix.

3 UNICEF, *Poverty Reduction Begins with Children*, p. v.

4 UNICEF, *Poverty Reduction Begins with Children*, p. 3.

5 Children in need of special protection measures may also be referred to as children in "especially difficult circumstances" or "conditions of adversity." While the terminology "child protection" or "children in need of special protection measures" may in Canada have the connotation of child welfare systems, CIDA is using these phrases interchangeably to refer to those children in developing countries and countries in transition who are the most marginalized in society and are experiencing exploitation, abuse, and discrimination.

6 Children between the ages of 12 and 17 may also be referred to as "young people" or "youth." However, these latter terms have flexible definitions that may include people as young as 12 or as old as 35 in some contexts.

7 This steering committee includes the governments of Ghana and Canada, UNICEF, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflicts, and NGO and youth representatives.

8 These numbers do not include programming in child protection that will be undertaken by CIDA's Central and Eastern Europe Branch, since much of this branch's activities are not considered official development assistance.

9 Although these excerpts focus primarily on the first two years of the plan, additional resources will be allocated in each branch for the remaining three years.

Photo captions and credits

Cover photo (top left)
A boy in Jaipur, India, operates a press owned by his family to make speaker cones. Children working in family-run businesses make up a significant portion of the world's working children.
CIDA photo: David Trattles

Cover photo (bottom left)
Part of a huge column of refugees, a boy uses a plastic tub to shelter his sister from the rain as they trek back to their home in Rwanda. During the war, many children had to flee their villages, and many were orphaned.
CIDA photo: Roger LeMoyne

Cover photo (right)
Risking life and limb if she steps on a land mine, a girl in Kabul, Afghanistan, scavenges for scrap metal which she will sell to help feed her family. Land mines were laid throughout Kabul during 15 years of civil war, which also destroyed most buildings in the centre of the city. Canada provided a team of military engineers to help remove the land mines.
CIDA photo: Roger LeMoyne

Title page
This little girl climbs off the bus that brought her back to Guatemala from refugee camps in Mexico.
CIDA photo: Peter Bennett

Contents page
These girls are rag-pickers in the slums of New Delhi, India. Rag-pickers spend their days looking for trash that can be sold to scrap dealers. These girls continue to work, but are also enrolled in a CIDA-sponsored school that offers basic education.
CIDA photo: David Trattles

Page 2
A girl is shown inside her home in San Juan de Miraflores, Peru. The girl's mother was arrested as a suspected terrorist and imprisoned for over a year, leaving the family with little means to support themselves. This is a common scenario—a family working at sustenance level suffers a blow, and the children are left to fend for themselves.
CIDA photo: Stephanie Colvey

Page 3
This young soldier is in the Cambodian army. More often than not, when we think of child soldiers, we picture them as part of rebel groups or other non-governmental armed forces. However, this is not always the case. Many underage soldiers are serving in national armies around the world.
CIDA photo: Roger LeMoyne

Page 4
Agricultural labour is one of the most common forms of child labour in the world. This young boy is on his way to a field near Santo Domingo, Guatemala, where he works picking the spice cardamom.
CIDA photo: Brian Atkinson

Pages 6-7
The war in Sudan has internally displaced hundreds of thousands of people—this little boy is one of them. He lives in a UNICEF-run camp for nomads from southern Sudan, which is located in what is essentially a desert. Lack of water and frequent sandstorms are just a few of the challenges that this little boy and his family face.
CIDA photo: Roger LeMoyne

Page 8
This Kosovar girl is at the refugee camp where she and her family spent the summer and early fall of 1998.
CIDA photo: Roger LeMoyne

Page 9
This photo of a polio-stricken Pakistani boy was taken during the 1994 Polio Immunization Day in Lahore. Officials had estimated that 15 percent of the population would be immunized—however, on the actual day, many more children than expected showed up to receive their immunization shots.
CIDA photo: Cindy Andrew

Pages 10-11
This little girl is a Palestinian Bedouin living in a camp adjacent to the Jerusalem city dump. She and her family live in poverty, their home a small shack. Many children from ethnic minorities find themselves in similar situations—the consequences of poverty compounded by ethnic discrimination.
CIDA photo: Peter Bennett

Page 11
A group of boys, all of them street-involved children, make their way through a market in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. It is common to find street-involved children joining together, in what amounts to surrogate families, as a way to cope with life on the street.
CIDA photo: Roger LeMoyne

Page 12
CIDA supported RCMP officers to work with the Brazilian police on strengthening community policing. This photo shows a Brazilian police officer talking to a group of street children in Sao Paulo about the dangers of sniffing glue.
CIDA photo: Pierre St-Jacques

Page 13
Many children in developing countries work in the informal economy. This boy, selling coconut in the streets of Niamey, Niger, is one such worker.
CIDA photo: Roger LeMoyne

Pages 14-15
This girl is picking the spice cardamom near Santo Domingo, Guatemala.
CIDA photo: Brian Atkinson

Page 16
Using a UNICEF poster illustrating different warning signs that could indicate the presence of land mines, a UNICEF instructor leads a land-mine awareness class with a group of Kosovar refugee children at a refugee camp outside Skopje.
UNICEF/HQ99-0489/
Jeremy Horner

Page 17
These Palestinian children live in Jericho, West Bank.
CIDA photo: Peter Bennett

Pages 18-19
This boy polishes gems in Jaipur, India. Save the Children Canada, with the support of CIDA, is working with child labourers in India, including gem polishers.
CIDA photo: David Trattles

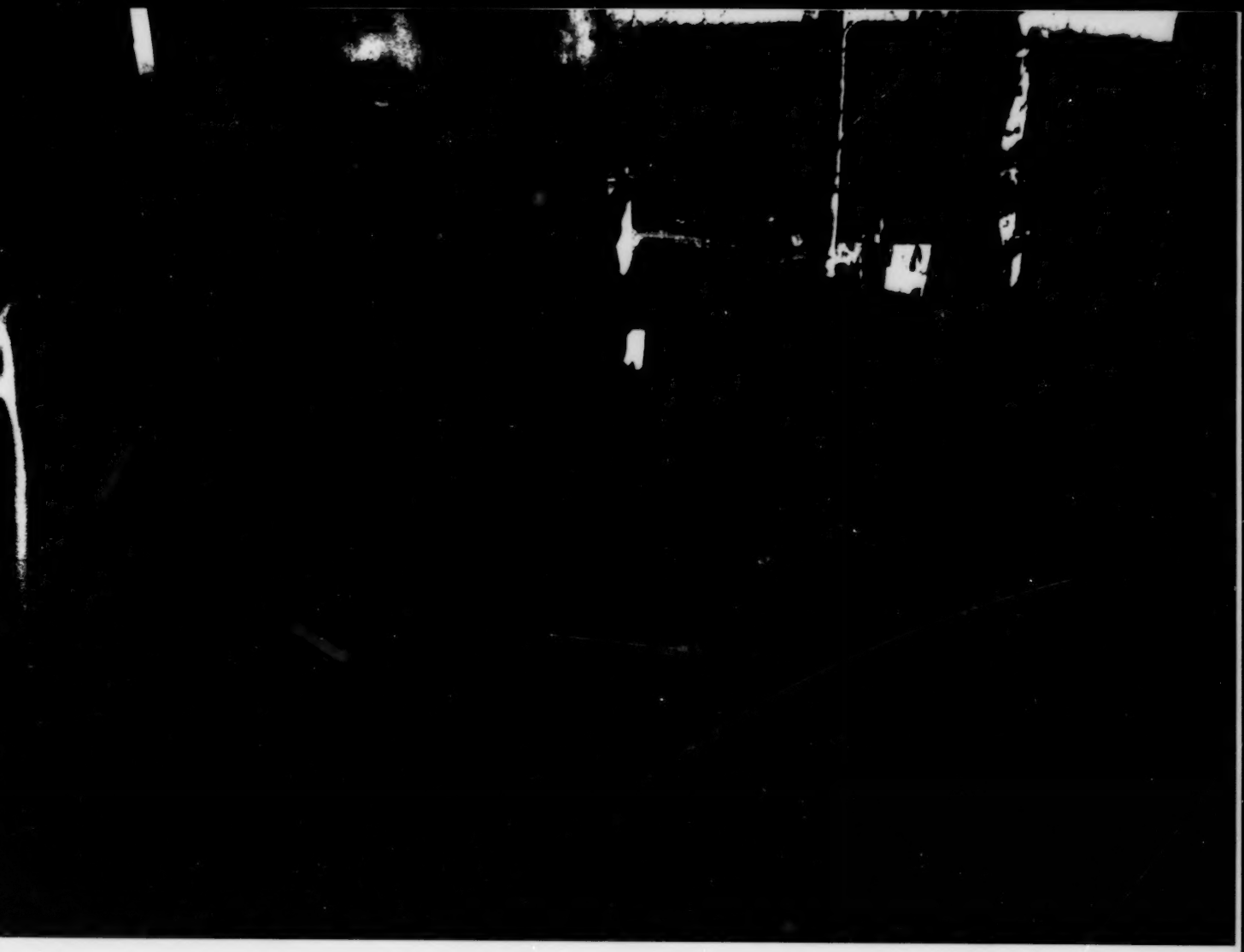
Page 21
Two boys, one a former child soldier, share a book as they sit on the steps outside a secondary school that is integrating former child soldiers into its classes in Bo, Sierra Leone.
UNICEF/HQ98-0580/
Giacomo Pirozzi

Pages 22-23
These high-school students attend a morning assembly at their school in Bumthang, Bhutan.
CIDA photo: Cindy Andrew

Page 24
This little girl is from Tsjaka, Namibia.
CIDA photo: Chris Osler

Page 25
Play is a fundamental right of children. Using plastic bags, strings, and sticks, children at a United Nations refugee camp near Sisophon, Cambodia, created kites. Even in the bleakest conditions, children will find a way to play.
CIDA photo: Roger LeMoyne

Page 27
These two young children are from the Capaj indigenous village in Guatemala. The area was one of the hardest hit during the civil war, and is still in the process of recovering.
CIDA photo: Brian Atkinson



Page 28
These Palestinian children live in Jericho, West Bank.
CIDA photo: Peter Bennett

Page 29
This indigenous girl from Guatemala grinds corn in Quetzaltenango.
CIDA photo: Brian Atkinson

Page 30
This boy earns money by selling small items on the street in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.
CIDA photo: David Barbour

Page 32
This boy is a victim of the war in Sierra Leone—he had both of his hands amputated by one of the rebel groups. He lives in the Amputee Camp in Freetown, Sierra Leone.
CIDA photo: Clive Shirley

Page 33
After their home was burned, this ethnic Albanian family lived for months in make-shift plastic shelters in the hills in Kosovo.
CIDA photo: Roger LeMoyne

Page 34
Children perform and watch a play in the Okhla slums of New Delhi, India. The play gives children the opportunity to express their views on the things that are important in their lives.
CIDA photo: David Trattles

Page 35
Muhammad Zir, a psychiatric social worker from the UNICEF-assisted Gaza Community Mental Health Programme, interviews a girl, troubled by problems in her family, outside her house in a squatter settlement on the outskirts of Gaza City.
UNICEF/HQ96-0761/ Roger LeMoyne

Page 37
These girls are sorting speaker cones in Jaipur, India. After work, the girls attend a CIDA-supported informal school that provides them with functional literacy skills.
CIDA photo: David Trattles

Pages 38-39
Two boys stand in the remains of their burnt-out home in Gloggovac, Kosovo.
CIDA photo: Roger LeMoyne

Pages 40-41
Refugees make their way back to Rwanda from the camps in Zaire where they had fled during the civil war.
CIDA photo: Roger LeMoyne

Page 42
These Kosovar boys are in a refugee camp near the village of Kishne Reke. At first, the refugee camps were a kind of adventure for the children, but life became more difficult with the onset of winter. Many children lost more than a year of their education.
CIDA photo: Roger LeMoyne

Page 45
A girl tapes her drawing of houses and flowers to a window of a UNICEF-assisted playroom in a collective centre in an old motel, some 10 kilometres from the town of Prizren in the province of Kosovo. The centre was set up to house ethnic Albanians who were displaced from areas in Serbia other than Kosovo.
UNICEF/HQ99-1122/ Roger LeMoyne

Page 46
This girl is selling tea and other goods at the main entrance of Angkor Wat, an ancient temple in the Siem Reap area of Cambodia.
CIDA photo: Roger LeMoyne